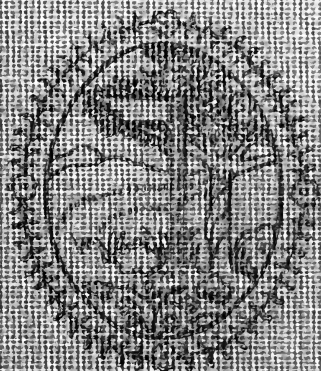


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*To the House  
of Friendship*



*Agnes Edwards*



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# THE HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP



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# The House of Friendship

BY

AGNES EDWARDS

*[pseud.]*

*Agnes Edwards Rotary*  
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BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

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## CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| I. REFORMING YOUR FRIENDS . . . . .             | 3  |
| II. PITY AND SENTIMENTALISM . . . . .           | 6  |
| III. WHAT THEY SAID THEY WANTED . . . . .       | 9  |
| IV. THE PEOPLE IN OUR OWN TOWN . . . . .        | 12 |
| V. SELFISH AND UNSELFISH FRIENDSHIP . . . . .   | 15 |
| VI. SOCIAL AND BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS . . . . . | 18 |
| VII. EUPHEMISM . . . . .                        | 21 |
| VIII. PEOPLE WE ARE AFRAID OF . . . . .         | 24 |
| IX. THE MEN THAT WOMEN LIKE . . . . .           | 27 |
| X. HOME TRUTHS . . . . .                        | 30 |
| XI. FEELING SORRY FOR OTHER PEOPLE . . . . .    | 33 |
| XII. SNOBBISHNESS . . . . .                     | 36 |
| XIII. THE POINT OF CONTACT . . . . .            | 39 |
| XIV. DR. BROWN . . . . .                        | 42 |
| XV. THE AMERICAN IDEA . . . . .                 | 46 |
| XVI. SHOP-WINDOWS . . . . .                     | 48 |
| XVII. HEROES AND COMEDIANS OF LIFE . . . . .    | 51 |
| XVIII. KEEPING A FRIEND . . . . .               | 54 |
| XIX. THE MEDDLESOME WOMAN . . . . .             | 56 |
| XX. THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING ELSE . . . . .    | 59 |

---

---

*Contents*

---

---

|  |    |
|--|----|
| XXI. THE DISAPPROVING ATTITUDE . . . . | 61 |
| XXII. THE ALARMIST. . . . .            | 65 |
| XXIII. BROKEN PROMISES. . . . .        | 67 |
| XXIV. THE IMPULSIVE WOMAN . . . . .    | 70 |
| XXV. UNIQUE EXPERIENCES . . . . .      | 73 |





## *The House of Friendship*

✻ I ✻

### REFORMING YOUR FRIENDS

REFORMING your friends—it can't be done. If you do reform them they cease to be your friends, and become your satellites—or your enemies.

It is a curious trait in some women to be perfectly unable to keep their hands off anybody. The more they love you, the more they want to reform you. They want to make you sympathetic or serious-minded or interested in politics. From the highest and most disinterested motives in the world they want to manage your affairs.

They feel perfectly confident that if you would take their advice, your children would all be healthy, your husband would renew his youth, your servants would stay, and that you would cut a dash in society.

There are women who as soon as they come

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## *The House of Friendship*

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into your house tell you how to rehang your pictures, and suggest ways to simplify your housekeeping. These women are all right : they are splendid managers, and they ought to be in positions of authority where they would have some chance for their powers of organization and reformation. But in private life they are terrors. They are magnificent as masters, but impossible as friends.

A friendship is one of the most precious things in the world, and like all precious things it cannot be too delicately handled. What do you seek in your own friends? You want sympathy, understanding, affection, mutual interests. You get incredible comfort in just knowing that there is some one who rejoices in your happiness and sorrows in your grief, who really cares what happens to you and what you do. If you want company, you go to your friends, and if you want advice, you go to them, and we all want advice sometimes. But none of us wants our private affairs seized with a rough hand and whipped into shape. They are our own private affairs, and, although some one else might get them into better

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## *The House of Friendship*

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shape than we ever could, yet most of us have an unreasonable preference for doing it our own way. There is nothing that the average, self-respecting person resents so heartily as being bullied, and managed and dictated to.

Why not enjoy our friends instead of trying to reform them? To be sure, that household keeps outrageous hours, and you are morally certain that if they went to bed at ten o'clock and had breakfast at eight, instead of retiring at one o'clock and eating breakfast on their way to the front gate, they would be healthier and happier. So they would, but they will never do it for all your protestations. The best thing you can do is to see that your own family get to bed at ten, and accept the other family as they are. And maybe, some day, seeing how happy and healthy your family is, or wishing to please you because of their genuine affection, they will reform themselves.

If you just remain an unobtrusive and loyal old standby, your influence will count for something, and some day you may be surprised to know of the difference you have made in the

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## *The House of Friendship*

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lives of all who know you. But you cannot do it by starting in with hammer and tongs to make the world go around the other way. It will never do it—never—and you will just have to give it up at last, very tired, and no one will care in the least.



### PITY AND SENTIMENTALISM

WOMEN are frequently accused of being sentimentalists, and one of the most usual ways that this sentimentalism is displayed is in morbid sympathy. It is a well-known fact that as soon as a man is legally condemned as a criminal, letters and gifts and tokens of condolence from women begin to deluge him. He might have been a hard-working, respectable citizen for forty years, and no one would be in the least interested in him. But let him murder his wife and be sentenced to death, and a great wave of pity surges through the feminine hearts throughout the land.

Pity is one of the most divine of all human



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## *The House of Friendship*

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attributes. There should not be an iota less of it in the world. But why treasure it so carefully for some spectacular occasion? Why be unwilling to release a grain of it unless there is some tremendous pressure or some glaringly obvious cause? Children catch at gayly colored things, and it is the grown people of childish minds who cannot feel anything appealing in the dull, gray lives of the sober and sad men and women around them, but need huge pictures and newspaper headlines to indicate to them where calamity has struck.

A hard-working and decent woman who sought aid of some charitable organization was turned away because it had no committee to handle her particular case, and as she departed she remarked bitterly that it seemed necessary to have committed some horrible sin before one could enlist commiseration.

A new charitable cause is espoused and a thousand women rush to its support. After a few years the novelty wears off and the women drop away — although the need continues and may be greater than ever before. The pity given

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## *The House of Friendship*

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under an emotional strain is not pity at all ; it is a sort of sentimental hysteria. Pity is something that sees beneath the superficial appeal to the great silent inarticulate need of those who are suffering. It reaches out to the stupid and blundering as well as to the brilliant and misguided. It goes out not only in the first flush of enthusiasm, but when the flush has died, and there is a long blank stretch of weariness and discouragement.

Do you think you are a compassionate woman? Is your heart so sensitive that the tears start to your eyes when you see a lonely little child shivering in the cold? And is it so sensitive that when your tears have dried you still remember the child, and all other children everywhere who are shivering, too, and are lonely? Is your pity so great that when every one else has deserted the woman who is unfortunate, you will keep on hoping for her, even if she has lost hope for herself? Through dull days and waste days is your tenderness still glowing? Or must you have a little stimulus in the way of spectacular developments or tragic complications?

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## *The House of Friendship*

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Not less pity, but a finer grade of pity — that is what we should give. Pity for the one who is struggling as well as for the one who has struggled and failed. Constructive sympathy that helps build up broken lives as well as brooding sentimentalism that merely weeps over the sorrows of the world. Real pity for real men and women — not morbid emotionalism for abnormal unfortunates — this is the pity that the world needs.

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### WHAT THEY SAID THEY WANTED

THEY were sitting at one of those small round tables in a smoky, music-jarred café, and the man with the tired look around his eyes was talking ruminatively: "My wife tries to get me to go to concerts with her," he was saying, "but I don't like the kind of music you hear at fashionable concerts. I'm not saying that the music is n't very fine and all that, but I'd like to hear some old-fashioned tunes. Now, if they'd play 'Annie Laurie' and some of the old ballads, I'd enjoy it immensely."

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## *The House of Friendship*

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"I know it," agreed the other more elderly man; "I'm tired of all this new-fangled stuff myself. I like a picture you can see. This present-day output that tangles you up whatever way you look at it does n't appeal to me."

They both puffed at their cigars a moment and then the man with the tired look around his eyes remarked: "I tell you men are sick of all this. Why, even the flowers are so fixed up and cultivated that you don't know them. What do I care for an orchid? I'd rather have a handful of daisies any day. I'm not saying my taste is better or worse than any one else's; I'm just saying what I'd like, and what half the men I know would like — old-fashioned things: old-fashioned music, old-fashioned flowers, and" — he smiled a little wistfully — "old-fashioned girls."

The other man smiled, too, and then he repeated thoughtfully: "Yes, old-fashioned girls; we're just sick for them, are n't we?"

Just what those two men meant by old-fashioned girls is not entirely clear. Being middle-aged gentlemen, they were probably going back

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## *The House of Friendship*

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in their minds to the time when they were young men, and the girls they knew embodied—at least to them—the graces and charms of all femininity. Now, looking out at the world with less ardent eyes, they are somewhat aghast at their sophisticated daughters and dashing daughters-in-law. The breezy girl who shakes them by the hand so strenuously that they are numb to the elbow for half an hour after, the vivacious woman who circles around and around them in her animated and epigrammatic talk—these had, perhaps, somewhat wearied the two gentlemen in the café. Then, too, they might have been thinking of the type of girl who used to please them a good many years ago. They might have been recalling, in something of a rosy haze, a girl with pink cheeks, smooth hair, gentle manners, and quiet voice; a girl who was not extraordinarily clever, but who was sweet, just as the simple flowers that grew in mother's garden were sweet.

Few of us want the modern girl to go back to the days of her grandmother. We like her better as she is; we enjoy her, we admire her,

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## *The House of Friendship*

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we respect her. But sometimes, perhaps, it does no harm to let our minds dwell for a little while on that other type of girl — the girl who was obedient to her mother, respectful to her father, and modest to all the world. Sometimes, perhaps, it does no harm to let the conversation of the two middle-aged gentlemen come to us through the crash and hurly-burly of modern life, as it came that day through the noise and smoke of the café — to hear the man with the tired look around his eyes say wistfully : “ What half the men I know want is old-fashioned things — old-fashioned music, old-fashioned flowers, and old-fashioned girls.”



### THE PEOPLE IN OUR OWN TOWN

THE people we have always known — the people in our own town — how fond we are of them in a certain comfortable way, and how little interest we really feel in them.

Two girls go to college and become fast friends, finding incredible attractiveness in one

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## *The House of Friendship*

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another; but had they chanced to come from the same town instead of different towns, they might never have discovered one another. A brother can never see why another fellow should fall in love with his sister. "Sister — why, she's all right, she's bully, but —" To him there is nothing mysterious, nothing elusive or fascinating about "Sister." There is solid worth and reliability, maybe, but nothing to bewitch, ensnare, and captivate.

And so it is with the people in our neighborhood. We like them, respect them, and are fond of them in an offhand kind of way, but there is nothing about them that fires our imagination. A striking girl comes visiting from a distant city and falls in love with some young man with whom we went to school, and we marvel. We see nothing romantic about that man: we remember perfectly well when we washed his face with snow or saw him in some other ignominious plight and jeered at him with all the cruelty of youth. And yet here is a girl who finds in him the consummation of her ideal!

Strange? Yes, and quite natural, too. So often

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## *The House of Friendship*

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we credit familiar figures with all the virtues and none of the graces, and need a newcomer to point out to us the charms of our own neighborhood.

For there are two ways of knowing people. There is the way that comes from constant and long association. You know everything about your near-by neighbor; how she lives and where she lives; you know her family history and the outline of her life; you see her frequently and are familiar with the way her clothes are cut and the way she sniffs through her nose, and yet you have never caught a glimpse of her soul.

And there is another woman you know in an entirely different way. You know practically nothing about her daily life, but you feel her personality. You meet occasionally and exchange ideas; your affection for each other is genuine, and neither of you is hampered by cast-off prejudices. You know the essentials and not the non-essentials—you know the woman and not merely things about her.

There are advantages to this dual system. A certain restfulness comes with the knowledge that your inner life cannot be molested by your



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## *The House of Friendship*

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family or your neighbors, because none of them takes the trouble to think whether or not you have an inner life.

But here and there are rare people who have the genius to appreciate what is near at hand. To them all the world is vibrant with interest. They see in their next-door neighbor what we have to travel the world over to find. But most of us — how far afield we go in search of wonders! Your enchanted land — is it some Italian town, some village in Cornwall or in Spain? Is it in snowy Russia or brave Denmark? Could it possibly be here, close to you, alive with people quaint, or charming, or stimulating, or romantic — the people of your own town?

### ⌘ 5 ⌘

#### SELFISH AND UNSELFISH FRIENDSHIP

A FRIEND is fondly supposed to be a comfort, a solace, a joy. We like to believe that our friends love us whatever we do, and in whatever way we do it. We think of them as sympathetic, eager to forward our interests, anxious

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## *The House of Friendship*

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for our happiness. And it is only after a good many rude awakenings that we come to the rather somber conclusion that this is only true of a very few of the people we like to call friends, and that a great number of people are just as selfish in their friendships as they are in any of the other relationships of life.

Have you never gone for a few days' flying trip to some other city, and having a limited time at your disposal, or some important business to do, you have not let your friends know of your whereabouts? One of them chances upon you on the street, and instead of welcoming you she immediately begins to scold you because you did not come and stay with her. After you have meekly listened and offered your explanation, you leave her, feeling very sorry instead of very glad that you happened to meet. Perhaps you run into another, are scolded again, and finally you leave the city feeling a great deal more uncomfortable than if you had met four or five of your worst enemies instead of your best friends.

.. The same thing holds true of letter-writing.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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How frequently we receive letters from our friends containing brief news and long reproaches for our not writing. What pleasure is there in either sending or receiving such epistles? The people who get offended because you do not call, who take it as a personal affront because you cannot accept invitations — what trials they are!

We want to feel that our friends love us as we are, and that they believe that we love them. If they do not understand why we do or do not do things, at least they believe that we have some adequate reason. The friend who never questions, who never scolds, who is glad to see us when we do come and not hurt when we cannot come or do not come, is one of the compensations of life. She is thinking of our happiness and convenience and not of her own. She is unselfish in her friendship.

Yes, we all know the kind of a friend we like. What kind of a friend are you?

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## *The House of Friendship*

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### SOCIAL AND BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

WOMEN to-day are going into the public and professional life that was formerly entered only by men, and, therefore, they should learn some of the things which men have long known. One of these is not to confuse social and business relationships.

It is not so much in regard to her actions that the average woman needs enlightenment, but it is in regard to her point of view. We all know that the stenographer who slides from her position as stenographer into one of confidential friend of her employer is doing an unwise thing. She is paid to write his letters, not to listen to his domestic troubles or advise him about his clothes and boarding-place. There is something peculiarly under-bred in flirting with the men one meets in a purely business way, and in trying to get on a social footing when it is work and not play that furnishes the opportunity. Most intelligent women realize this, and let their relationships with the men they meet rest

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## *The House of Friendship*

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just where the natural circumstances throw them.

But regulating one's actions is always easier than changing one's point of view, and it is on the point of view that many women fail. For instance, a woman goes to hear some well-known man lecture. "What do you think of him?" asks her husband. "Oh, I think he is horrid," she replies; "he uses bad grammar, and his coat was so dusty it was a disgrace." She entirely forgets that she went to hear a public man lecture, not to meet a social friend. It was the man's speech and individuality, not his superficial characteristics, that should matter in this instance.

"I always liked to read Chesterton until I heard that he ate with his knife," a woman said the other day. Now the fact that Chesterton does or does not eat with his knife has little to do with his essays. You may be interested in this bit of biographical information, but it need not affect your enjoyment of his writings. Of course, if you are asked to dine with him, you may refuse, if you consider that he is not in your social stratum.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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What people are socially is a very real thing, but it is not the only thing. There are many other qualities that go to make up a human personality, and if you are not intelligent enough to perceive them, you will lose a great deal in this world.

We should all learn to meet people on other grounds than those of class: to think of them as standing for this or that principle or idea, as pegs on which to hang our plans, or characters in our day's drama, or as human beings struggling toward very much the same end that we ourselves are struggling toward, but not only and solely as presentable or unpresentable ballroom decorations. We should accept them for what they are, where they are, and not toss them aside because they are not in our particular class. If they are good of their own class, — no matter what that class is, — they are as admirable and as interesting as any one else.

Remember that the social ground on which to meet one's fellows is a very narrow one. We may keep it as narrow as we please, if we do not forget that it is not everything there is. Do

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## *The House of Friendship*

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not confuse social and business relationships.  
Learn to meet people on other grounds.

⊗ 7 ⊗

### EUPHEMISM

It is characteristic of most of us to be euphemistic in regard to ourselves. We veil our disagreeable qualities with as pleasant terms as we can. We are "sensitive," not "touchy"; we are "vivacious," not "noisy." We insist pathetically that our disagreeableness is "frankness," and our crankiness "nerves."

Euphemism is an excellent habit. There are so many undisguisably harsh things in the world that we should be grateful to any one who smooths off the rough corners, or permits only a subdued light to fall on glaring faults. But the trouble with many euphemistically inclined persons is that they only use the art in regard to themselves. Thus, when they are dull they call it pensive, but when you are dull they call it sulky. And that is exasperating.

There are always two ways of judging any-

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## *The House of Friendship*

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thing. Sometimes there are twenty, but always there are two. And if you want to be happy, you will learn to judge in the most kindly and most merciful way. Since we cannot know, in the last analysis, the exact motive for any action, why not think the best instead of the worst?

Your neighbor's daughter may not live at home because she does not like her mother or because her mother does not like her; but she may not live at home because the climate does not agree with her, or because she can earn more money and do more for the household by living somewhere else. There are a dozen reasons why she may not live at home, and since you are not going to do anything about it, anyway, but are so constituted that you cannot rest until you have decided — why not decide upon the most euphemistic probability?

The other day a big automobile ran into a little one and nearly killed the two boys in the latter. The ladies in the big touring-car were so sensitive that they nearly fainted, and demanded instant and prolonged attention upon recovery. Later, when the case was brought up in court,



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## *The House of Friendship*

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much stress was laid upon the sensitiveness of the ladies and their nervous shock. The condition of the mother of the injured boys never seemed to occur to them, and yet one might reasonably expect a truly sensitive person to recognize other people's nerves as well as his own.

Listen to a mother describe her child. You always thought the boy a loutish, clumsy, unpractical chap, but she tells you with glowing eyes that he is gentle, and strong, and full of idealism. Which is right? The mother, of course. The one who loves us the best always understands us the most searchingly. Our friends and not our enemies are truest judges.

Euphemism should be cultivated, not discouraged. But it should be cultivated to make the complete circle. Call your morbidness "interest in the psychological" if you wish. Maybe it is. At all events, we can give it the benefit of the doubt. But call your neighbor's tendency by the same polite term. That is only fair.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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⌘ 8 ⌘

### PEOPLE WE ARE AFRAID OF

YOU admit that if you should be introduced to the King of England, you might be embarrassed. You will probably agree that if you suddenly met a hungry cannibal, you would be afraid. But if any one should ask you how many other people you were afraid of, you would reply glibly, "Why, nobody." Yet the fact of the matter is that all of us but the most courageous are most miserably under the tyranny of an entire class of people, just as completely as the serfs were under the tyranny of their overlords. To explain:—

A young woman in a restaurant will study the menu card for several minutes and finally timidly suggest to the condescending waitress that she would like a certain twenty-five-cent dish. The waitress takes the order disdainfully, and the young woman, ashamed of seeming stingy, hurriedly caps it by asking for a forty-cent dessert. She really does not want a sixty-five-cent luncheon and she cannot afford it, but

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## *The House of Friendship*

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she is so shaken by the haughty scorn of the waitress that she orders it and chokes it down, and with it her feeling of rebellion.

Has your heart never gone out in sympathy to some customer who, completely unnerved by the saleswoman's lofty "Of course, you cannot get any smart hat for less than fifteen dollars," murmurs eagerly, "Oh, of course not." She knows that she can afford to spend three dollars and fifty cents for her hat, and she has a miserable feeling that the saleswoman, for all her grand air, knows it, too, and so after a polite hesitation she frames some patent excuse and fades vaguely away.

We think it very funny when some girl tells us about the agonies she suffered when she was visiting and the imperious lady's-maid unpacked her suitcase and discovered the meagerness and general inelegance of her night apparel. But we do not think it so funny when the desk-man at a hotel looks at us contemptuously and says incredulously, "A dollar room?" We falter hastily: "Oh, no. Something—a little—a good deal—a little better than that, please"; and

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## *The House of Friendship*

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then despise ourselves for being so easily influenced.

It is not funny. It is acutely painful. Perhaps we could break away from this thralldom—which is no chimera, but a reality, with the dire results of a flattened pocketbook and an extreme irritation—if we remembered that these men and women to whom we are in such abject subservience are not really dukes and duchesses, but merely quite commonplace mortals, and perfectly familiar with the process of trying to make one dollar do the work of two.

The saleswoman who assures you that you cannot buy a hat for less than fifteen dollars probably pays a dollar-ninety-eight for hers, if she pays that much. That impressive waiter does not order squab for his own dinner. The bored aristocrat at the theater box-office would not buy orchestra seats if he were going to witness the performance. Let us stand together, pluck up our courage and look them squarely in the eye, and say firmly, "I want the best I can get for the money, and this is all the money I have." Perhaps we shall find them human, after all.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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Perhaps we can free ourselves from this ancient and ignominious bondage, and begin to save our money and to get what we really want.

⌘ 9 ⌘

### THE MEN THAT WOMEN LIKE

THERE is a very prevalent theory that women—even nice women—prefer “men of the world” to solid, respectable ones. This theory is usually advanced by some elderly lady who shudders with fear and horror at the mere sight of any but the mildest manifestations of the male species, or by some unprepossessing youth who fails to get the girl he wants and sees some fellow whom he considers his mental or moral inferior dash in and win the day.

And women rarely refute the accusation. They confess covertly to themselves that the so-called worldly men of their acquaintance are rather more attractive than the others, and therefore they accept the criticism as true. But if they would think about it a little they would soon discover just what it is they like in men. A del-

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## *The House of Friendship*

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icately minded girl does not like a man because he is a *roué*, but she likes many of the qualities that such a man takes time to cultivate, and that the other type of man does not.

Too frequently the young man with a character of pure gold is so flagrantly careless about his appearance and the small courtesies that a well-bred girl, who knows how things should be done, cannot enjoy his society. She might be glad when she is fifty that she had married a high-minded scholar and a man of integrity, and if he had won distinction in some field of letters or of business no one would mind if he were a little rusty or untidy. But when she is twenty, the average girl takes small pleasure in entertaining or being entertained by a man who neglects to have his shoes polished, his clothes pressed, or his hair cut. She is irritated when he forgets her tastes or ignores her foibles, and lets her hunt up her own chair or pay her own car-fare.

For the sophisticated man never forgets the little things. He dresses carefully and spotlessly, knowing that the ugliest man can be attractive

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## *The House of Friendship*

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if he carries himself with dignity and takes time to attend to the details that mark the difference between the prepossessing gentleman and the unpresentable person. The sophisticated man is — outwardly, at least — thoughtful, considerate, and charming. He may not spend more time or more money than another, but whenever he does a thing he does it so exquisitely that any woman must be delighted. He knows that no attention is too small to be gracefully rendered if one would please a woman, and if he only pays her car-fare he does it as if it were such a privilege that even that small attention becomes the sweetest flattery.

No, nice women do not prefer men who are not nice. They prefer charming men to boors, and entertaining men to bores. But the girl of to-day is too sensible to prefer a dissipated man to a temperate one, or a *roué* to an honorable gentleman.

And the girl of to-day is too resourceful, also, to be utterly dependent upon any man. Much as she enjoys men's society, she is perfectly able to get along without either the fascinating ad-

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## *The House of Friendship*

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venturer of unsavory repute, or the blunderer who forgets his manners, or who is unwilling to spend any money or any time in giving her happiness or any effort to learn what would please her.

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### HOME TRUTHS

HOME truths are a peculiar body of facts. Every real family has a more or less voluminous accumulation of them—the accumulation of each family being very like that of every other family in main outline, but elaborated to fit various situations and idiosyncrasies.

Probably since earliest history small brothers have thought their older sisters “stuck-up,” and oldersisters thought their small brothers “rude.” And probably since earliest history they have voiced their opinions in extremely simple, direct Saxon terms.

But, like many other old-fashioned things, home truths seem to have fallen into disrepute of late. This does not mean that they are not



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## *The House of Friendship*

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offered with the same eagerness and emphasis as of yore, but that nowadays it is the fashion for them to be disdainfully repudiated by the should-be recipient. For instance, if a young girl is assured by her friends that she is delightfully vivacious, and when her mother tells her gravely that it is not vivacity but pertness, the young girl is very apt to toss her head, — vivaciously or pertly according to whichever standard you accept, — and, remarking that her mother does not “understand her,” seek the consolation of more admiring friends. The young man who glories in his reputation among his associates for being “temperamental” allows the unkind definition of “grumpiness” in his family circle to slip inconspicuously off his shoulders. A woman who likes to think she is an accomplished coquette disbelieves a disgusted family when they remark she is a vulgar flirt.

Home truths must have a great deal of vitality to persist after so many years of cold reception and scanty entertainment. But they have vitality, and they will always exist as long as the human family endures. The reason is simple.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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The family is the most indestructible organization in the world. The true family is bound together by ties nearer and dearer than any other ties on earth.

Your family loves you, not because you are clever or beautiful or agreeable, but simply because you are yourself, and its affection is the most disinterested affection there is. In spite of the unkind tartness of many home truths, they are, as a rule, largely prompted by love, and therefore they deserve more credence than they usually get. Have you never thought, when you heard an hysterical woman making herself conspicuous in some silly way, that, if she had listened to the unflattering criticism of some scoffing brother instead of to the flattery of other women as silly as she, she might have saved herself from being a spectacle that is both ridiculous and pathetic?

The brother who derides his sister's foibles does not do it altogether from a love of teasing, but because it irritates him to see her making herself absurd. The mother who insists that her young son wash his hands and wipe his feet

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## *The House of Friendship*

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does not do so because she loves to nag, but because she wants him to grow up to be mannerly instead of mannerless ; while the outsiders who encourage the girl in her frivolity and the boy in his rowdyism merely do it for their own amusement.

Home truths are the real truths. Do not despise them because you can hear pleasanter things elsewhere. Do not think that your family do not understand you. They understand you well enough. And they not only understand, but they really care—and that is why the home truth is the most valuable truth you are likely to hear.

### ⊗ I I ⊗

#### FEELING SORRY FOR OTHER PEOPLE

“ WOULD N’T you think that the woman who passes out coupons in a subway entrance all day would be so sick of it that she would want to commit suicide ? ” says one girl to another as they pass through the turnstile.

“ The person I always pity is the waitress in

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## *The House of Friendship*

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a restaurant," replies the other. "Think of feeding people and feeding people and feeding people forever and ever and ever, in the clash of china and the smell of soup! Why, it nauseates me just to think of it!"

There are few things we are more generous about than pitying people whose occupation would be distasteful to us. The thought of the woman who shampoos head after head day in and day out, and of the chorus girl who capers and giggles night after night, are both appalling to the housewife as her daily duties of cooking and cleaning and sewing would be to either of them.

Have you ever wondered how that actress could play the same part over and over again? Or how this shop girl can be obliging to the continual stream of shoppers who are "not quite sure just what they do want"?

Let us console ourselves with the reflection that there seems to be some law of adjustment that fits each one of us for the work we have to do. The spangled lady in pink tights who leaps through hoops at the circus regards the

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## *The House of Friendship*

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gaudy tawdriness of her surroundings with the same naturalness and matter-of-factness as the stenographer regards her typewriter or the busy mother regards the faces of her children. Some women would be horribly bored if they had to go to teas and dinner-parties all the time, and others would be horribly bored if they had to teach mathematics all the time. And yet both *débutantes* and school teachers seem passably contented with their respective lots.

Another thing that may relieve the sensibilities of the abnormally sympathetic is to remember that there is always much in the experience of others that we know nothing about. The girl who apparently passes her entire life showing coupons across the marble slab in the subway turnstile has a complete existence outside the circle of that narrow cage. She may sing in her church choir; she may go to occasional dances; she may sew on her clothes, entertain young men, belong to a club that meets weekly for candy-making and good time. Her work gives the backbone to life and is the most im-

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## *The House of Friendship*

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portant feature of her day: but it is not the whole of life nor all of the day.

We should never pity people who have work to do. The lot of an overworked seamstress may be more enviable than that of an idle society bud. Your shampoo girl and your telephone girl and your painted chorus girl are probably none of them bored with their occupations. They may be perfectly happy and probably are. It is a waste of emotion to feel sorry for people simply because they are doing things that would be dull or tedious or difficult for us. Do you have any one to feel sorry for you? Of course you don't. So work the rule backward.

⊗ 12 ⊗

### SNOBbishNESS

HAVE you ever watched people wandering through an art gallery, admiring the various objects and commenting on the various artists — their lives, their genius, their achievements? And have you ever remembered that when those artists were alive, the very same class and

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## *The House of Friendship*

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type of person which now reverences them probably scorned them, laughed at them, or at best ignored them? And then have you ever thought that to-day there are artists with the same love and appreciation of beauty, the same desire to express that love, and that they, also, are scorned, laughed at, and ignored?

Most people only accept genius after it has been officially and formally accepted by the world; they only recognize greatness after they have been told that it is greatness. They have no genuine response in their hearts or in their brains for what is noble and true; they only have a veneer of cultivation and a desire to appear intelligent.

The same attitude is assumed in all directions. The social snob sees no charm in any one who was not born into a certain "set." The intellectual snob sees nothing interesting in any one who has not an education similar to his own. The moral snob sees no goodness but the kind of goodness he professes.

There is something indescribably contemptible in the attitude of the average person to-

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## *The House of Friendship*

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ward genius which, maybe, is too uneven ever to be successful, toward beauty which is too irregular ever to be popular, toward goodness which is too simple ever to be conspicuous.

Bound by convention, unable to form an independent judgment, incapable of standing by that judgment if it were formed, thousands and thousands go to watch worthless plays, listen to cheap music, read poor literature, just because they have never learned to make any standards of their own or to respect their instinctive standards.

The snob is one of the most ignoble of human creatures ; he swims upon the tide of other men's convictions and reasons. The most exquisite beauty is a blank to him unless it has the stamp of respectable approval upon it. The most saintly life is meaningless to him unless it is conventionally effective.

If you are not a snob, if you have real discernment, you will recognize talent — potential, perhaps, but none the less real — in the most pitiful of apparent failures. You will see beauty where others see only ugliness. You will know



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## *The House of Friendship*

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that the meanest man has the possibility of being a hero — although perhaps only for one supreme moment — and the lowest woman a saint.

But snobbishness is deep in the human heart. Two thousand years ago a prophet was not without honor save in his own country. And, regardless of the hidden treasures which lie everywhere around them, men and women still complain at the world's paucity and stretch out their empty hands to the gold at the end of the rainbow.

### ✻ 13 ✻

#### THE POINT OF CONTACT

DON'T you know how you occasionally glance at a magazine article, and although the subject may be one which has never interested you before, yet something in this particular treatment of it immediately catches and holds your attention? In the same way there are some people whom you always enjoy listening to, no matter what topic they discuss. Some teachers can take the dry bones of any subject and so clothe them

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## *The House of Friendship*

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in living flesh that you are spellbound by their magnetism. What is it that makes some matter readable, some people interesting, some arguments persuasive? What is this trick that first catches the other man's attention and finally wins his consent? It is no trick at all, but a well-recognized principle which all successful lawyers, ministers, writers, teachers, and conversationalists have mastered to greater or less extent, either consciously or not. Pedagogists call it the point of contact, and it is the first step in the art or the science of persuasion.

If you want to get a man over to your way of thinking, the first thing to do is to establish a point of contact. Get his point of view for a few minutes; go with him in his line of thought for a while, and then, when he is in a complying and acquiescent mood, gently lead him into the path which you choose.

A mother wants to make her little boy stop using slang. She can say for years, "Tommy, I do wish you would stop using slang," and it will have as much effect as whistling to the wind. By using sufficient emphasis she can

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## *The House of Friendship*

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make Tommy stop using slang in her immediate presence, just as she can shut the wind out of her immediate room ; but she cannot be any more sure that he is not using slang when he is out of earshot than she can be sure that the wind has stopped blowing. If she really wants to get at the heart of the matter and to uproot the habit permanently, she must go at it in an entirely different way. She must try and understand just why Tommy uses slang. Does he think it is smart, or does he do it to be like the other boys? Is it a habit or is it perverseness? She must first get in line with Tommy's angle of view, and then argue from that. And unless this point of contact is established, all argument is utterly futile, for Tommy will not listen, and will not be persuaded.

We all want to make our appeal to various people for various purposes at some time or other. If you are a teacher, you must get the children's interest before you can begin to teach ; if you are in business, you must get your associates' attention before you can commence negotiations. The parent who simply commands

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## *The House of Friendship*

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without taking the trouble to persuade loses power over his children just as soon as they are old enough to throw off that command.

To win a woman to your side, you must first put yourself in her place, and then gradually work back with her to your place. If you do not do this, all your eloquence and rhetoric and erudition go for naught, and you can hammer at her head for a year with no more effect than if it were a head of cast-iron. Get the other person's angle of perception, establish your point of contact, and with this as a starting-place, you stand a good chance of carrying your opponent over into whatever camp you choose.

⌘ 14 ⌘

DR. BROWN

DENTISTRY is hardly a subject which recalls to our minds pleasurable sensations of any kind. We anticipate a visit to the dentist's with shuddering unwillingness. We pass through it with anguish, and we remember it with lively bitterness. There is probably no process tolerated by

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## *The House of Friendship*

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civilization which is so fraught with deliberate pain as having a tooth filled or a nerve treated or any other of those dear familiar operations. Therefore, when a dentist succeeds in beguiling his patient into a fairly unrebelling state, we may admit that he has done wonders.

There is a certain dentist who has done this very thing, and his secret is one which would open the doors of success to many other than the dental regions. You must first understand that this dentist — we will call him Dr. Brown — does excellent actual work. There is no mild placing of a filling upon a tooth and then politely informing one that all is well. He goes through every grewsome step down to its minutest and most harrowing detail with thoroughness and precision. He is, in short, an excellent dentist. But the reason that his doors are crowded is not merely because of the superfine quality of his technique, but because of his personality, and through this he has accomplished the miracle of almost painless dentistry.

What is personality? What more than one's point of view working out through the medium

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## *The House of Friendship*

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of manner, voice, and gesture? Dr. Brown, in spite of the fact that he sees a dozen or so wretched victims daily, still remembers that each one is an individual capable of just as intense suffering as if he were the only person alive. He still remembers to say, "Ah, I am sorry," in a tone of deep solicitude at each twist of discomfort. He still remembers to give warning of any sudden impending calamity like a sharp, shooting pain or a new and hideous sound. In brief, he treats each patient with a gentleness and care that spreads an almost cozy atmosphere over the whole performance. You feel as if some one who really cared for your slightest twinge were close beside you, comforting you; —not as if you had been flung out to writhe in misery in blank loneliness.

And your mental attitude becomes so much less rebellious and so much more grateful, that unconsciously your muscles relax and you find yourself enduring the ordeal with approximate equanimity.

It is simply that Dr. Brown takes your point of view instead of insisting upon his own. The

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## *The House of Friendship*

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usual attitude of the average dentist suggests: "Come, come, it must be gone through. Of course, I don't want to hurt you any more than I have to, but you'll probably survive as others have survived before you." But Dr. Brown is not like this. Each time an aching void in the guise of a grudgingly opened mouth is revealed to him, he instantly catches the struggles of the patient's mind, and as instantly makes them his own, working with them instead of against them.

Sympathetic his patients call it; a good business asset the cynical might remark. But, at all events, it works, and works beautifully, and Dr. Brown is a successful man.

The other fellow's point of view — there is nothing like it for making one popular socially or financially. How does the other fellow feel? What does the other fellow want? What is it that the other fellow considers important, desirable, worth paying for? Figure it out; make it your own, too; surely this is one of the secrets of success.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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✻ 15 ✻

### THE AMERICAN IDEA

HE was only eight years old, and his mother was ill. He was commissioned to carry her up a bowl of broth, which he did with great care and precision. She thanked him, and then said rather wistfully, looking around the empty room: "Won't you stay with me half an hour, dear? There may be some errands you can do for me." He gave her a searching glance as if to determine whether she really needed his services or merely desired his company, and then answered firmly: "Mother, I am very busy to-day. I can't possibly spare you fifteen minutes." Probably the mother's laugh as she surveyed his small important face and serious, diminutive figure did her more good than all her medicine, but the fact remains that he was only eight, and the Great American Idea of being busy had already lodged itself securely in his mind.

We, too, laugh at the little boy; but what are we but children of larger growth? How many actions, graceful or comforting, how many pleasantries



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## *The House of Friendship*

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we omit and curtail because we “are very busy, and can’t possibly spare fifteen minutes !” The always busy person can never spare the time to do anything. She is perpetually hurried, and perpetually hurrying. She reminds us of a squirrel in a cage — around and around and around again, and what is accomplished when all is done?

Work is the great salvation, but being busy does not necessarily mean work accomplished. The people who give the most maddening and persistent impression of bustle are not those who turn out the greatest amount of actual achievement.

Driving one’s self and others is due, not to pressure of work that must be done, but to a state of mind.

The little boy of eight who did not see how he could possibly spare fifteen minutes for his mother is no more absurd than plenty of his older prototypes.

Dawdling is a sin, but scrambling through life with not a moment to lose is no virtue. The only compensation in the situation is that the woman who hurries so earnestly all the time will

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## *The House of Friendship*

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soon have no other distractions, for nobody will care whether she stops or not.

How laughable — how ridiculous is the picture of the little boy remarking with all the importance of a bank president: "I can't possibly spare you fifteen minutes." But what about ourselves? Is our occupation of such vital consideration that the world will crack if we pause for a brief breathing spell? Are we laughable, too, sometimes, when with worried brows and serious voice we insist regretfully: "So sorry — but I can't possibly do it. You see, I could n't spare even fifteen minutes"?

⊗ 16 ⊗

### SHOP-WINDOWS

THERE are few sights more fascinating than a beautifully and skillfully arranged shop-window. Window-dressing has become an art and a science within the last decade, with books written about it, and lectures delivered to sales-people concerning it; with results from which we all derive much pleasure.

( 48 )

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## *The House of Friendship*

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And one of the principles applied to shop-windows might very aptly be applied to many a young girl, who, like the shopkeeper, wishes to display her wares and to lure in the possible shopper. It would, obviously, be extremely short-sighted for a shopkeeper to dress up his windows with every fine and attractive article he had, and to leave his shelves and counters bare. For even if the would-be customer did step in, he would soon find out his mistake and step out again, and that would be the end of the story.

And that is the end of the story for many a woman who has learned the trick of displaying her most attractive qualities at the first roll-up of the curtain, and has quite forgotten to keep herself well stocked in a good line of substantial goods.

Who does not know the girl who has a smattering of information along almost every line? She can make a good showing even with the truly educated for a short time, and she can dazzle the uneducated for a longer time. But sooner or later they all find her out. They step

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## *The House of Friendship*

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inside and see that the window display is not an excellent and representative line of samples, but is the entire stock. And then they shrug their shoulders and say, "Humph, another fraud !" and are done with those goods forever.

Girls who are sweet-voiced and obliging in company, and shrews and viragos at home ; who are so neat and frilly on the street, and so untidy and slatternly when no one is there to see — they do a good deal of harm in a superficial way, for they cast a slur upon the genuine article, just as a fake shop casts discredit, temporarily, upon all the shops in the district. But that is not the worst of it — the worst of it is the stupidity and short-sightedness of such a policy. The more attractive you are, the greater mistake you make if you fail in substantial qualities. The best advertising in the long run is the advertising that tells the truth — tells it in as striking and tempting a manner as you wish, but really tells it: in other words, advertising something that is worth buying.

Being a fraud is the least profitable profession in the world. Putting all one's goods into the

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*The House of Friendship*

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shop-window is a business that does not pay. You may get your purchasers in—you may even relieve them of a few ducats; but you cannot keep them and you cannot make them come again. Window-dressing may be an art even when it cannot fulfill its promises, but it is never a science until it represents a truth. And fascinations are a poor advertisement when they do not stand for those happy livable qualities that make life sweeter instead of merely more glittering.

✻ 17 ✻

#### HEROES AND COMEDIANS OF LIFE

SOME people always look happy, always greet us with a smile, always radiate good-will. It may be their disposition, or it may be a principle with them, or it may even be due to their facial contour and features. But whatever it is, merely looking at them in a street-car is enough to transform a gloomy morning into one of comparative cheerfulness. These individuals might be called the Comedians of Life, and to them,

( 51 )

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## *The House of Friendship*

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as to all comedians, popularity flows easily. They assume nothing, ask for nothing; we need not talk to them nor listen to them, but when they are present we cannot help responding to their geniality any more than a drooping flower can help responding to the sunlight.

We all are apt to underestimate the effect which we have upon others; we underestimate the force of our character and the receptivity of theirs. And yet no one of us can move among our fellows without making them sway, either toward us or away from us, just as the slightest breeze parts and waves the tallest of grasses.

This unconscious influence which we exert so constantly is based partly upon our superficial characteristics, partly upon our achievements, but principally upon our innate natures. Nobility of motive, simplicity of thought, directness of action, and distinction of character—these are what enter into our personalities and make them what they are.

Which of us can ever forget the vivid sensation which flashed through us upon seeing or

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## *The House of Friendship*

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meeting a man or woman about whom our imaginations had woven the purple mantle of romance and wonder? Some great writer, some brilliant actor, some celebrated artist whose personality seemed to our reeling senses a reflection of a divine power? And standing agape, staring impolitely at this marvelous person with a thousand thoughts crowding into our brains, a thousand agitations and aspirations shaking our hearts, we have gone through an experience which left its mark forever upon our memories, our hopes, and our ideals.

We cannot all be geniuses to inspire such emotions in those we meet, but whatever we are it is concentrated and intensified by our individuality, just as the diffuse beams of the sun are concentrated by some powerful lens.

Just as we cannot make our bodies invisible by any magical garment, so we cannot conceal our natures by any trick of personality. What we are shines purely forth, as a light or a lure or a warning to every one who passes by. And, as the audience in the theater recognizes at once the clown, the villain, and the *ingénue*, so, sur-

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## *The House of Friendship*

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veying the larger stage, the spectators applaud or smile as they meet the heroes and the comedians of life.

⊗ 18 ⊗

### KEEPING A FRIEND

WE cannot lose a friend whom we truly love, for that love itself is what makes the friendship. When you hear a woman say sorrowfully that her perfect friendship has been broken, her words reveal that it never was a complete relationship. Her friend gave her affection, companionship, understanding, or whatever it was, and now that she has ceased to give it everything seems gone. But if the recipient had given affection, companionship, and understanding of such noble and endearing qualities that nothing could quench them, and if she still continues to give them, she is still loving, and she still has the best part of friendship. For what makes a friendship is what we put into it, not what we get out of it. The mother loves her child no matter how erring it may be: and from her



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## *The House of Friendship*

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mother love comes her great happiness. The child who merely accepts the devotion knows nothing of such joy.

And so it is with friends. The way to have a friend is to be one — the way to keep your friend is to continue to care for her no matter what she does or what she is.

The people who are lonely in this world are those who are always looking for something to come to them; they hope for pleasant adventures; they exact much from their friends and from their family — and they are never satisfied. But the happy men and women are those who never think to demand for themselves — who give and give and give again, and find joy whenever they find opportunity to give joy.

The unhappiest wife is not the wife whose husband has ceased to love her; it is the one who has ceased to love her husband. The discontented child is not the one for whom nothing is done by others, but who does nothing for others.

The human heart is so constituted that it is only filled by the richness which flows from it — not by the richness which flows into it.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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Does your friend neglect you? Has her apparent enjoyment in your society cooled by imperceptible degrees? For every shade of coolness offer more of your warm affection — and you will find no longer discontent, but an ever-increasing satisfaction. Trying to warm our hearts by the affection which others bring us is like trying to warm a house by placing heated bricks against the outer walls; the house must be warmed from within; it must radiate heat, not absorb it.

If you would have a friend, be one; if you would keep a friend, continue to love; for just so long as you do, you hold the choicest part of happiness.

✿ 19 ✿

### THE MEDDLESOME WOMAN

THE scientist pins an insect to a card and then focuses his powerful microscope upon it and studies it, carefully, minutely, dispassionately. In somewhat the same manner it would be interesting to study the meddlesome woman —

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## *The House of Friendship*

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to dissect her and find out what makes her act so. There will be no difficulty in finding specimens! Even the poorest of us can procure a few choice ones, either in our immediate circle or in the community at large.

The purely meddlesome woman is not necessarily malicious; she may not even be officious or disagreeable. The desire to interfere does not imply any other desire; it is a special hunger, a unique craving. The woman who is consumed by the thirst to meddle is like a crazy man who wants to tickle every one he sees.

How well we know her! She may be a maid in our kitchen, or a neighbor, or a member of the family, but whoever she is, and whatever her station, she is always itching to be "in" things, to be consulted, to receive confidences, to advise, to warn, to console. She goes into a home where every one is happy, and although she may be fond of each member of the family and glad that they are so harmonious, yet the very sight of them sets her on edge and whets her appetite. She tingles to drop a suggestion here or a hint there that will make them all at

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## *The House of Friendship*

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sixes and sevens. She warns the mother to look out for her daughter; she rouses a dozen vague fears in the father's breast. She simply cannot rest until she gets her finger in the family pie.

In the office it is the same story. She sows secret seeds of alarm, of suspicion, of dissatisfaction—not because she really wants to make people unhappy, but because she hankers quenchlessly to be “in” everything.

Nearly all of us except the phlegmatically stolid have felt this tantalizing appetite at times—this mischievous yearning to make trouble. But we have denied it, and therefore we can keep it within bounds. But the meddlesome woman has not denied it; she has yielded to it, and now it consumes her like fire.

We need not condemn her; that will do no good. We need not punish her; she suffers more than we. We can avoid her; we can be careful to give her no handle against us—no information which she may twist to our harm, no loophole through which she may creep. But, for the rest, we must pity her, as the victim of any craving is to be pitied.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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If you feel this insidious thing growing within you, stamp it out. Refuse to gossip, to fish for scandal, to listen to dissensions. Go your own way and let other people go theirs. Take yourself in hand as sternly as if you were battling for life, or, before you realize it, you will find yourself devoured by an insatiable appetite that "grows by what it feeds on," and which will turn at last to feed upon yourself.

⊕ 20 ⊕

### THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING ELSE

ONE very merciful arrangement in the regulation of this universe—an arrangement which takes us many years to appreciate—is that there is always something else.

When we are young—young in years or young in experience—we declare, passionately, hotly, vehemently, that we want what we want when we want it; there is nothing—no, absolutely nothing—that can take its place. But as we grow wiser we find that there is always something—not so good, not the same, per-

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## *The House of Friendship*

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haps — but, still, something. You cannot have the hat you want, but you can have some sort of a head covering, and, after all, it is not of supreme importance. Your dinner does not please you ; pork does not agree with you, and you do not like onions—well, there is always something else, if it is only bread and butter.

Perhaps you have a friend with whom you are most happily congenial ; your friendship means much to you ; you cannot imagine how you would endure life without it. And then something happens, the friendship is broken, and you survey the ruins and think, “ Everything is gone ; there is nothing left in my life.” But after a time — it may seem an eternity — you find that other flowers are growing in the garden you thought laid waste forever, and that your life is not empty after all.

We cannot appreciate the consolation of this provision when we are on the heights or in the depths of an experience. We insist that we can never be happy again. But slowly, gradually, old wounds heal, old scars fade, and the brilliancy of the sunset is followed by the calmness

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## *The House of Friendship*

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of the night. It is not the same thing that once was, to be sure, but it is something that has come to you. There are no vacuums in nature nor in human hearts.

We are so sure that we know what we want, and we rebel bitterly when we cannot get it, or have to relinquish it. We want it so much that we think there is nothing else in all the world. But there is. Other birds come back to sing in our wind-blown trees; other children come trooping to the deserted house; other fires are lit upon the empty hearths; and fresh rivulets trickle down parched channels.

And we realize that we need not have suffered so terribly long ago if we had only believed then what we know now — that no matter what happens, there is always something else.

⊗ 21 ⊗

### THE DISAPPROVING ATTITUDE

IF you want to do the most disagreeable thing in the world cultivate an atmosphere of disapproval. This atmosphere is warranted to

( 61 )

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## *The House of Friendship*

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kill good cheer, paralyze spontaneous endeavor, and throw all but the incurably optimistic into profoundest gloom.

People who enfold themselves in the disapproving attitude sometimes claim to be unconscious of it, and this is irritating, for every one else is so painfully conscious of it that it seems an unjust chance that the perpetrator alone should be spared.

The attitude of disapproval is usually made manifest by a cold eye, a mouth drawn down at the corners, and a demeanor of congealed unresponsiveness. The possessors select for their habitat the bosom of some good-natured family — usually their own — or a respectable boarding-house, for they would be suffered nowhere else. Their specialty is not in condemning any person nor any action in frank speech, but in casting around them a glance of chilly deprecation that stops all cheerful conversation as effectually as a cork stops the flow of a bottle.

Disapproving people are, as a rule, absolutely convinced that they are right and that you are wrong, and nothing could induce them to change



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## *The House of Friendship*

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their minds on this score. They are prone, also, to consider themselves more refined than other members of their family, or more pious, or whatever their desideratum may be. They do not reprove your words, but they decline to sanction them; they do not censure your actions, but they disallow them; they say nothing, but they look volumes.

There are two kinds of disapproving persons; one is this way because it is her nature, her natural manner, and a habit hard to break. The other assumes the attitude because she considers it salutary. The first type is unfortunate; the second mistaken. Any one who thinks that one can cure, or change, or rectify, or improve another by an attitude of mute reproof is on an entirely wrong track.

If you have a friend who is pursuing a course which you consider detrimental, you have several methods open to you. One is to go to her honestly and tell what you think and then say no more about it. Another is to ignore the circumstance entirely. And another is to go and have a good old-fashioned row and "make up"

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## *The House of Friendship*

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or refuse to "make up" according to your ideas on the subject. But to wrap one's self in a chill and forbidding mantle of silent reproachfulness is enough to kill any affection in the world.

If you are one of those mute, disapproving ones, here is something to remember: in the first place, nobody has the slightest idea what you are disapproving of; and in the second, you are helping no one, enlightening no one, disciplining no one; you are forcing them to take their pleasure elsewhere, to confide their griefs and to share their pleasures with some one else. That is all.

A disagreement is sometimes necessary; a sharp conflict may be stimulating; the truth must sometimes be delivered with emphasis; but there is never any need for that most hateful and unhelpful of all weapons—the disapproving attitude.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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⌘ 22 ⌘

### THE ALARMIST

THE alarmist is one of society's most active and busy caterers. She furnishes "sugar and spice and everything nice" for large social gatherings, as well as for cozy tête-à-têtes. Her supply never runs out; is always fresh, and guaranteed to give a thrill or a shudder to each recipient.

The alarmist tells you that "the poor, dear Jameses are on the very verge of bankruptcy; that Mrs. William Jenks looks badly—very badly; and although we hate to admit it, it does seem like a decline. And would n't we think that Mrs. Bings would be worried to death about her son Billy? The child wriggles so; he surely has something frightful the matter with his nerves—St. Vitus's dance probably. And as for Marcia Dingleberry, she will never, never in all this world get through college. She is a sweet girl, but she is n't quite bright."

When the alarmist gets through with her résumé of the living and the soon-to-be-dead,

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## *The House of Friendship*

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the more susceptible of her listeners are in the cold shakes.

The alarmist differs from the gossip, in that the gossip talks about any one and any thing, and is inclined to malice, but the solicitude of the alarmist is only aroused in the case of those precarious and uncertain individuals who seem about to topple over the precipice to ruin.

An up-to-date alarmist, in good working order, can think up more distressing probabilities for her friends and acquaintances than can the most ingenious manager of the chamber of horrors. She is very fond of introducing the modern theory that every one is partially insane, and of making startling personal application of it. Insidious and incurable diseases are also specialties with her, while impending financial and matrimonial disaster are steady wares.

Life would have a tendency to become monotonous without the ministration of the alarmists. We would miss the exhilaration of the double shock of first hearing and then recovering from the information that we were on the verge of a nervous collapse, that our brother

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## *The House of Friendship*

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was going to elope with the candy-counter girl, and that our house was a perfect firetrap. All these exciting possibilities would be lost to us if it were not for the loud shriek of agitators.

Alarmists are never, on any occasion, to be taken seriously, but occasionally it is rather diverting to let one of them open her pack like an insistent Eastern peddler, and see what variety and fantastic array of goods she can set before us in the twinkling of an eye. And after we have smiled our "None to-day," and she has regretfully withdrawn her lurid temptations, we turn back to the sober room of daily living, a little relieved to find it still rather dull, and shabby, perhaps, but full of grateful stability and rest.

### ⊗ 23 ⊗

#### BROKEN PROMISES

ONLY one who has accepted a promise and allowed faith to grow up about it, and then felt it break in time of stress, appreciates that swaying time of bewilderment and loss. The one

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## *The House of Friendship*

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who breaks the promise does not feel the same shock, for her emotions are divided. The reason why she broke the promise was stronger than the reason why she made it, and her preliminary conflict has rendered the final crash less unexpected. Circumstances being what they are, and human nature being what it is, it was impossible for her to have acted any differently, she argues, and now she is ready for a fresh try.

But the one toward whom the obligation has failed is not ready so quickly. If a friend says to you, "I will not tell," and then she does tell, it is impossible for you to believe her again immediately. You may love her just as much, you may want to trust her, but it is a psychological impossibility. She has not only torn up the flower which you planted together, but she has laid waste the soil. Before the flower of faith can bloom again, new ground must be found, new seed be sowed, and then the time abided for new flowers to grow. When the fortress of assurance has been leveled, one does not only have to begin at the beginning again, but one must carry away the old débris, fill up the old

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## *The House of Friendship*

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foundations, and go through the toil of clearing away the old ruin before even beginning on the new.

If we realized how significant our promises were, we should probably make fewer and keep them better than we do. When once we give a pledge, we have given something of ourselves, and its acceptance implies the same generosity as opening the doors of a home to strangers. The stranger who betrays his hospitality not only closes the doors of entertainment to himself, but injures all who come after.

The golden cord of our warranty which we extend to our friends is the most sacred thing we can proffer them, and if we snap it when other demands press, it is profaned for all time. When next we would offer it, it is tarnished and torn, and not even the most careless will put credence in it.

The promise-breaker must begin all over every time. He must reestablish his credit whenever he wishes to use it. There is no continuing city for him; he is always at the beginning. Not because we do not wish to believe

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## *The House of Friendship*

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him, but because human instinct refuses to trust to a bridge that has once proved rotten.

The man whose word is gold has won half the battle of life. He has the confidence of his fellows, and that is one of the secrets of success. But the loose-mouthed are continually toiling upstream and against the wind. Even when we want to have confidence in them we cannot, and it is only when they have built a dozen bridges stronger than the one which gave way that we dare to venture forth again, and trust our weight to them.

⊗ 24 ⊗

### THE IMPULSIVE WOMAN

AN impulsive, open-hearted woman of forty was once asked what trait in her own character she would still hold to if she were to live her life over again, to which she promptly replied, "My impulsiveness." The warm, quick impulse that makes the hand go out in sympathy, that pulls the dollars out of our pockets, that pricks our hearts into instant recognition of a need, is

( 70 )



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## *The House of Friendship*

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something that cannot be bought or hired, but must be born in one, either by nature or by admiration. Life would be a very prosaic affair without these flashes of blue across the skies of every day, and if we waited until all our deeds of impulse were catalogued, listed, and defined before they were expressed, they would probably never see the light.

But the impulsive woman sometimes is rather unsatisfactory. When she feels like sending flowers, she sends them, but when you may feel like having flowers sent, she may never think of it. When your impulse coincides with some one else's impulse, all goes well, but when it conflicts with some one else's impulse, things go awry.

The systematic person who trusts to a maxim rather than to an emotion may not be an inspiration, but she is a comfort. She brings order out of chaos and peace out of turmoil. In the office, at home, in society, everywhere, she is loved, respected, and relied upon. Her actions are based, not upon the volatile "feeling so," but upon the foundation of genuine consideration for others.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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This cautious, deliberate type of woman, who seems to do what her head tells her is sensible rather than what her heart tells her is lovable, may be irritating at times, but in the end she is a blessing. Her smile does not depend upon the weather, nor her good humor upon her digestion. Her spirits may not be brilliant, but they are very comforting. Her face may not sparkle with animation, but on the whole it is a pleasant expression that creeps about eyes that are always kindly, and about a mouth that never says the bitter thing.

The impulsive woman has this advantage over the opposite type; she is generally more attractive, superficially. All the world loves a warm greeting and a cordial manner, and a woman of moods is usually more fascinating in a certain way than a cool, staid one.

And since the impulsive woman has this advantage, why does she not go and win the race more often than she does, instead of seeing, as is frequently the case, the prize of social popularity and genuine affection fall to the quiet, methodical girl?

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## *The House of Friendship*

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Is it not often because the girl who is blessed with a warm, quick nature does not use that nature, but lets it use her? What a pity she does not learn, from the woman who is only half as entertaining, that what the world wants is people who are thoughtful as well as people who are gay, and people who really care for the pleasure of others and not only for the response they get for themselves.

Let your impulsiveness have full play, but when it lapses, — as impulsiveness is bound to do, — be sure you have a good store of old-fashioned and substantial virtues to fall back upon, for “after a woman’s charm has won the battle, her character is the advancing standard.”

### ⊗ 25 ⊗

#### UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

Most of us enjoy believing, when any rather unusual experience comes to us, that no one in the whole world was ever quite so happy, or quite so miserable, or quite so perplexed as we are. There were never a pair of lovers in the

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## *The House of Friendship*

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world who did not believe that they loved each other in a way that was peculiar, beautiful, unique. There never was a chronic invalid who did not secretly pride herself on being more frequently at death's door than any one else, and a little nearer that portal than is the common privilege. Every business woman is busier than any other ; every mother has more household duties than you ever heard of before — and so on through an endless category of occupations, experiences and joys and sorrows.

There seems no reason why we should not extract whatever melancholy pleasure we may from the conviction that we are tremendously sensitive or terribly misunderstood, but it surely is the acme of egotism to refuse to acknowledge the idiosyncrasies of other people as well.

There is a certain type of girl who is always having mysterious "affairs." You never get a very definite idea as to what these "affairs" are, but she firmly impresses upon you that they are different from the "affairs" of most girls ; that your "affairs" are probably poor commonplace things like everybody's, but that hers — well,

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## *The House of Friendship*

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you could n't understand what she was talking about even if she should try to explain.

And yet, after all, this is quite an old world, and in all likelihood the entire gamut of human events and emotions has been run several times. The experience which has come to you — it may be one of shame, or hope, or sudden understanding, or swift calamity — came to Eve, probably, and has come to many of her daughters since. Why, that stupid-looking woman in the apartment below may be passing through the self-same waters of affliction that are overwhelming you.

Your heart is as cold as stone because the fire that warmed it has flickered and gone out. You are chilled with grief, and it does not make it less poignant to be told that joy has fled from many women. All you realize is that it has fled from you and that you are suffering. Your own experience is real, and there is nothing to be gained from undervaluing it. But there is much to be gained by valuing that of other people as well, and when their joys depart from them to give them the tribute of believing in the utterness of their sorrow.

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## *The House of Friendship*

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You are happy ; you have found some secret key that unlocks many treasures. You must not think it is nothing because others have found that key before. Only when, later, you will see some one else who is also happy, give her credit in your mind and in your heart for finding as true a key and unlocking as real treasures as those of yours.



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